Occupied Kashmir to China. China illegally claims approximately 90,000 square kilometers of Indian territory in the Eastern Sector. In the Middle Sector, China illegally claims about 2000 square kilometers of Indian territory.

(d) India and China have agreed to seek a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable settlement of the boundary question through peaceful and friendly consultations. The Special Representatives appointed by the two sides have been tasked to explore the framework of a boundary settlement from the political perspective of the overall bilateral relationship on the basis of agreed political parameters and guiding principles. Pending a final resolution of the boundary question, the two sides have agreed to strictly respect and observe the line of actual control.

Agreement between India and Mauritius

3142. SHRI DARA SINGH CHAUHAN:

DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister recently visited Mauritius;

(b) if so, the details of talks held and MoU signed between India and Mauritius;

(c) whether India still gives the preferential status to Mauritius;

(d) if so, the details of benefits which accrue to Mauritius from our country;

(e) whether there is any need to review this status;

(0 if so, the details thereof;

(g) if not, the reasons therefor;

(h) whether any delegation from Mauritius is likely to visit India; and

(i) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) Yes Sir, he visited Mauritius from 30th March to 2nd April, 2005.

(b) Extensive discussions were held between India and Mauritius during the visit covering all aspects of cooperation between the two countries. Following Molls/Agreements were signed during his visit:

(i) Agreement for setting up of a Joint Working Group on combating international terrorism.

(ii) Moll relating to Bilateral Air Services between India and Mauritius;

(iii) MoU on cooperation in the field of Protection of the Environment.

(iv) MoU on offering a fresh line of Credit of US $ 10 million for the Baie du Tom beau Sewerage Project.

(c) India has special relationship with Mauritius. It has signed a number of agreements with Mauritius to promote bilateral cooperation with it in various fields. India attaches great importance to comprehensive development of the Mauritius and has been providing it with assistance in various areas.

(d) There is no doubt that Mauritius has derived considerable benefit from the assistance rendered by India in different fields, economic, industrial, health, human resource development, etc. Among the important projects for which Indian financial and technical assistance has been rendered to Mauritius mention may be made of the following:

(i) Establishment of the Cyber Centre.

(ii) Construction of Swami Vivekananda International Convention Centre.

(iii) Building of the Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital.

(iv) Establishment and modernization of Upadhyay Vocational Training Centre.

(v) Supply of equipment to S. Bharati Eye Hospital.

(vi) Supply of construction equipment to Development Works Corporation of Mauritius.

(vii) Establishment of a farmers service centre.

(e) India's policy towards Mauritius remains consistent and unchanged.

(f) Not applicable.

(g) Not applicable.

(h) and (i) Delegations from Mauritius at different levels visit India at regular intervals to promote bilateral cooperation in various areas. This is an ongoing process. There is no information about any proposal of a high level delegation from Mauritius to visit India in the near future.

Lobby to safeguard Indian interest in America

3143. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India sacked Akin Gump Strauss Haur and Feld of USA for failing to lobby effectively against the sale of F-16s to Pakistan by USA;

(b) if so, whether India has appointed any other lobby firm to safeguard its interest in USA; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) The contract of the lobbying firm M/sAkin Gump, Strauss, Hauer and Feld LLP expired on 30 September, 2004 and was not renewed.

(b) and (c) The appointment of another lobbying firm to advance India's interests in the US Congress would follow a detailed analysis of past results and an assessment of future objectives.

Economic Diplomacy with Pakistan

3144. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have given emphasis to economic diplomacy and co-operation with Pakistan;

(b) the details of business propositions which have been discussed with Pakistan;

(c) whether it is a fact that the Indian High Commission has been asked to do the follow up on all such diplomacy;

(d) whether a special officer would be appointed in our High Commission in Pakistan to supervise all on-going problems and matters with Pakistan; and

(e) the details thereof?